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REMARKS

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-16 and 23-34 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 101 "because the specific claims lack utility". The Applicants have amended claims 1, 11, 23, 26, and 30 to recite an intended purpose or use to overcome the deficiency recited by the Examiner on page 2 of the office action. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-16 and 23-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 17, and 18 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Japanese reference JP407147638A listing Yada as an inventor, hereinafter referred to as Yada. The Examiner has rejected claims 11 and 12 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Yada in view of U.S. patent number 6,501,851 issued to Kondo et al, hereinafter referred to as Kondo.

The Applicants have amended claims 1, 11, and 17 to overcome the Examiner's rejections of claims 1, 11, 12, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). The amendments to claims 2-4, 7-8, 10, 12, and 14-17 have been done to avoid § 112 rejections that may have otherwise arisen without the amendments to the dependent claims, in view of the amendments of the corresponding independent claims.

The Applicants contend that the sections of Yada and Kondo cited by the Examiner do not teach or suggest the limitations of the amended claims 1, 11 and 17. Therefore, a valid prima facie obviousness rejection of the amended claims 1, 11, and 17 is not present. Because the limitations of the amended claims 1, 11, and 17 are incorporated by reference into the respective dependent claims 12 and 18, a valid prima facie obviousness rejection of these claims is not present. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 11, 12, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

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Objections to Claims 2-10, 13-16, 19 and 20

The Examiner has objected to claims 2-10, 12, 13-16, 19, and 20 because of dependency on a rejected claim but has indicated that these claims could be made allowable. The Applicants contend that claims 2-4, 7-10, 12, 14-16, and 20 are now in allowable condition because of the amendments placing their respective independent claims in an allowable condition. Claims 5-6, 13, and 19 have been canceled rendering the objections to these claims moot. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the objections to claims 2-10, 13-16, 19, and 20.

Allowed Subject Matter

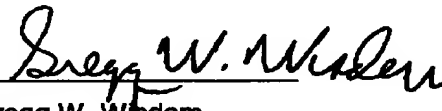
The Examiner has indicated that claims 21 and 22 are allowed.

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully contends that the subject application is in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, allowance is respectfully request.

Respectfully submitted,

Morgan T. Schramm

By 
Gregg W. Wisdom
Reg. No. 40,231

June 2, 2005
(360) 212-8052

S/N: 09/919,647
Case: 10011942-1
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